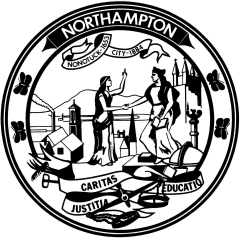




ARPA

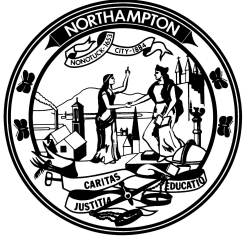
American Rescue Plan Act Process Update and Initial Survey Results

Mayor David J. Narkewicz
Presentation to City Council
December 2, 2021



The City of Northampton's ARPA Process

- ▶ Updates to ARPA Goals, Approach and Timeline
- ▶ Brief Overview of Topline Data from the ARPA Survey
- ▶ Next Steps

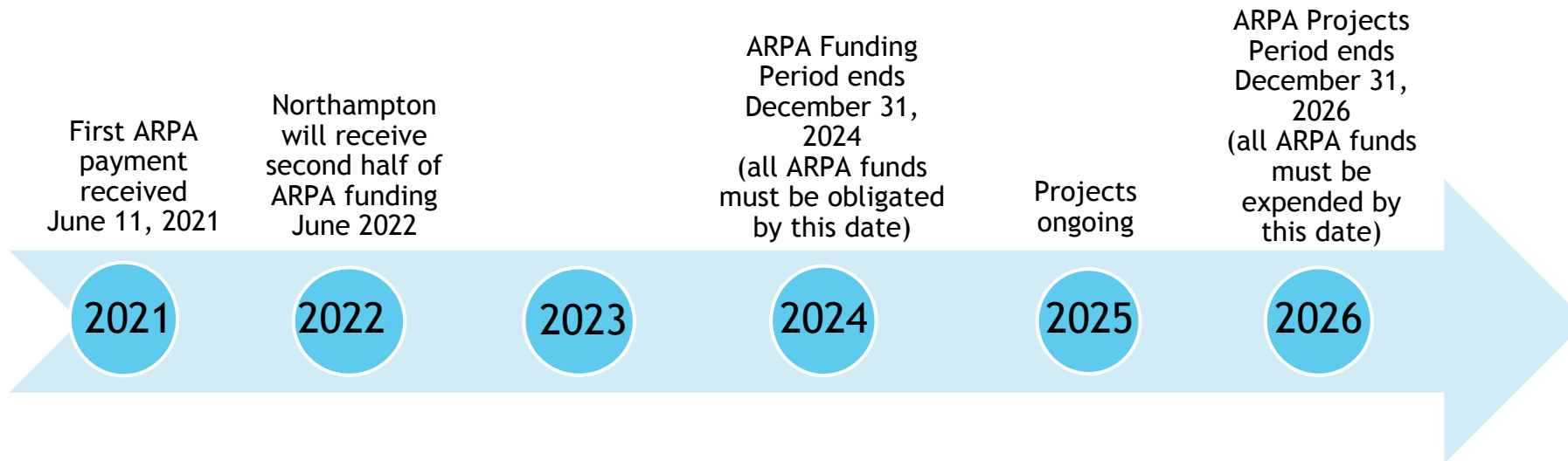


Goals for Distributing ARPA Funds

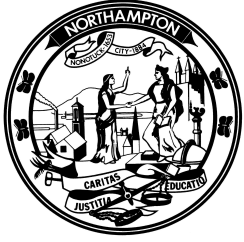
- ▶ Seek extensive input and feedback from the community to help structure the city's use of ARPA funding
- ▶ Design a transparent, accessible, and equitable project selection process for allocating funds
- ▶ Prioritize projects, people, businesses, and organizations with a focus on those most impacted by COVID-19
- ▶ Leverage other state and federal resources to maximize Northampton's ARPA funding
- ▶ Cover the city's costs to administer ARPA funds



Recap of City of Northampton ARPA Funds Timeline



- ▶ The City of Northampton will receive **\$21,747,984.00** in these relief funds over the course of the next two years. All of the funding must be committed by December 31, 2024 and fully expended by December 31, 2026
- ▶ Funds will be disbursed in two installments. We received our first payment in June. The second payment will be disbursed in June of 2022
- ▶ The city's independent auditor, in consultation with Mass DOR, recommends a formal acceptance vote of ARPA funds by the the City Council



UPDATED: City of Northampton Proposed Near-Term ARPA Timeline

- September 22, 2021: Mayor Narkewicz presents ARPA framework to City Council
- October 1, 2021: City launches online Community ARPA Survey
- November 2, 2021: voters elect City Council President Gina-Louise Sciarra as the 45th Mayor of Northampton
- November 3, 2021 - January 2, 2022: Mayor Narkewicz works with Mayor-Elect Sciarra to transition ARPA coordination and planning
- November 28, 2021: Community ARPA Survey complete
- January 3, 2022: 45th Mayor of Northampton, Gina-Louise Sciarra sworn into office
- January 2022: Mayor Sciarra forms an ARPA advisory committee to help gather more community input and to advise her on the project selection process
- Winter/Spring 2022: Request for project proposals issued
- Spring 2022: Projects selected, funded, and initiated





Reminder: How can Northampton Spend the Money?

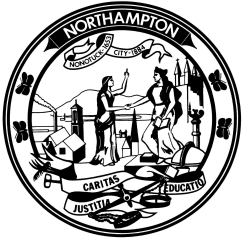
There are four acceptable categories of use:

Category 1: Respond to the public health emergency or its negative economic impacts, including assistance to households, small businesses, and nonprofits, or aid to impacted industries such as tourism, travel, and hospitality

Category 2: Pay workers providing essential work during the COVID-19 public health emergency

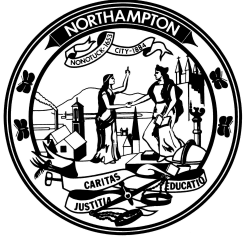
Category 3: Provide government services to the extent of the reduction in revenue to the City due to the COVID-19 public health emergency in the most recent full fiscal year

Category 4: Make necessary investments in water, sewer, or broadband infrastructure.



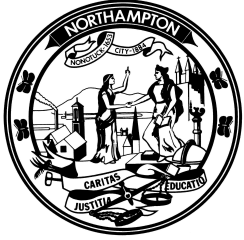
ARPA Community Survey

- The main goal of the survey was to help Northampton develop a transparent, strategic, and equitable plan for Northampton's federal ARPA funding
 - **Part One** - understand the impact of the pandemic on city residents
 - **Part Two** - survey city residents' priorities for COVID-19 response and recovery efforts
- The survey was available online from October 1, 2021 through November 28, 2021
- The survey reached roughly 1,460 respondents, with nine residents opting to take the survey in Spanish



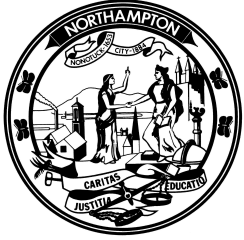
Mental, Social, and Emotional Health were key issues during the pandemic

- While strong majorities of Northampton stakeholders reported their status as 'excellent' or 'good' on every measure asked, about one in five respondents shared that their household was doing only 'fair' or 'poor' in terms of mental health (23%) and social and emotional health (21%).
- Further, mental health-related issues top Northampton residents list of major or moderate problems, with 28% 'feeling nervous, anxious, or on edge,' 18% 'feeling down, depressed, or hopeless,' 16% 'feeling lonely or isolated,' and about 13% each citing access to mental health services and medical services as problems.



The Pandemic Created Financial Difficulties for Some Locals

- Economic concerns (14%), and providing remote support to extended family members (13%) are listed as major or moderate problems facing Northampton households. Forty-six percent share that COVID-19 had a major or slight impact on their household income.
- Nineteen percent report that someone accessed unemployment insurance in their household, along with 7% who took advantage of food assistance. Far fewer report accessing mortgage, rental, or utility assistance in Northampton. Most said they were aware of some or all of the services available, and few reported difficulties accessing them - with the exception of 7% who said it was very or somewhat difficult to access unemployment benefits.

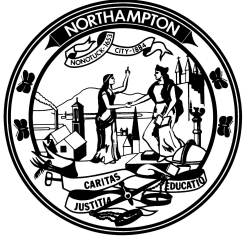


Northampton Reports Major Impacts on School-Aged Children

- Of the 360 respondents who reported they have school-aged children (or 31% of the overall survey population), 50% reported that the pandemic had a 'negative impact' on their children's education, and 33% said it had a 'major negative impact.'

Impacts on children in their own words:

- *"social/emotional impact. previously highly motivated and high performing kids became less motivated and learned less."*
- *"My older child felt isolated and lonely and had a hard time concentrating, my younger child became scared and often angry and lost social skills he was developing."*
- *"Remote learning was very difficult for one of my sons. The lack of in person contact with teachers and friends impacted his mental health"*
- *"School closures, challenges with childcare, lack of social learning and development, increase in screen use."*



Additional Family Challenges

- *“I spent about \$20k on childcare last year that was unexpected. I have a childcare voucher but I couldn’t access it due to losing our spot in a voucher accepting programs when they canceled their youngest class due to covid. I contacted local representatives but nobody could do anything. We were all on our own to figure it out. Very stressful year for parents and as a single mom... well, I planned on raising my kids in a village! Until they are vaccinated it will be a struggle still”*
- *“Attempting to work from home while everyone is home, close quarters”*
- *“The monopoly of Comcast and its cost is a real challenge when you are so dependent of internet access”*
- *“Were unable to visit elderly parent in assisted living, loss of contracted work as self employed person, college age child had to move home and attend community college remotely, loss of social connections”*



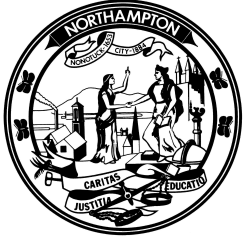
Top Five Priorities for ARPA Funds

Services and shelter for people currently experiencing houselessness	52%
Housing assistance (mortgage/rent/utility assistance, homelessness prevention, weatherization, legal aid, etc.)	50%
Sustainability/Climate change mitigation and adaptation	49%
Digital equity initiatives (i.e. broadband expansion, affordable internet, technology, etc.)	44%
Food security	39%
Health care (including mental health, physical health, wellness programs, etc.)	37%
Childcare and early education/pre-K	37%
Small business assistance	35%
Transportation infrastructure	31%
Water systems infrastructure (fixes, improvements, or upgrades to water, sewer, or stormwater systems)	29%
Public health (pandemic response, disease prevention, etc.)	27%
Outdoor recreation initiatives, parks and recreation infrastructure	26%
Arts, culture and tourism	19%
Jobs and workforce training programs	19%
Services for Seniors and Veterans	18%



Most Critically Important City-Wide Community Needs for the City to Focus Federal Resources

Not enough affordable housing	75%
Not enough support for small businesses	53%
Streets and sidewalks in poor condition	51%
Insufficient public transportation or poor transportation services	48%
Not enough sustainability and environmentally friendly services	47%
Too many vacant properties	47%
Not enough businesses or right type of business nearby	35%
Not enough quality housing	32%
Other Neighborhood Needs (please specify)	28%
Crime/illegal activity/safety issues	25%
Too much litter, trash or presence of illegal dumping	22%
Not enough parks or recreational areas nearby	19%
Not enough property maintenance and upkeep	15%
Too many foreclosures	5%



ARPA Next Steps

- December, 2021: ARPA survey data finalized
- January 2022: Mayor Sciarra forms an ARPA advisory committee to help gather more community input and to advise her on the project selection process
- Winter/Spring 2022: Request for project proposals issued
- Spring 2022: Projects selected, funded, and initiated